

REMARKS

This Amendment is fully responsive to the non-final Office Action dated March 25, 2009, issued in connection with the above-identified application. Claims 14-26 were pending in the present application. With this Amendment, claims 14, 17-20 and 23-26 have been amended; and claims 15, 16, 21 and 22 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer to the subject matter therein. No new matter has been introduced by the amendments made to the claims. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

To facilitate the Examiner's reconsideration of the present application, the Applicants have provided amendments to the specification and the abstract. The changes to the specification and the abstract include minor editorial and clarifying changes. Replacement paragraphs and abstract are enclosed. No new matter has been introduced by the amendments made to the specification and the abstract.

In the Office Action, the abstract has been objected to for exceeding 150 words. As noted above, the abstract has been amended. As amended, the abstract has been reduced to less than 150 words. A replacement abstract is enclosed. Withdrawal of the objection to the abstract is now respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 20-24 and 26 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Specifically, the Examiner alleges that claim 20 at lines 4-5 recites the phrase "setting on an operation of apparatus" which appears to be missing text. The above limitation is similarly recited in claim 26. Additionally, claims 21-24 are rejected based on their dependencies from claim 20.

The Applicants presume that there is a misunderstanding with regard to claims 20 and 26 given that claim 14 recites "a setting on a connection between the apparatus and the apparatus controlling device," and claims 20 and 26 recite "a setting on an operation of the apparatus."

However, the Applicants assert that the recitation in claims 20 and 26 "a setting on an operation of the apparatus" is correct.

Specifically, claim 14 is directed to an apparatus control system including an apparatus, an apparatus controlling device and a server; and claim 20 is directed to an apparatus to be

communicatively connected to a server. The apparatus recited in claim 20 includes the function of the apparatus and the function of the apparatus controlling device recited in claim 14.

In claim 20, the apparatus controlling device and the server are not connected to each other, but the apparatus and the server are connected to each other. Accordingly, a setting on a connection between the apparatus and the apparatus controlling device is not necessary. In view of this, claim 20 does not recite "a setting on a connection between the apparatus and the apparatus controlling device," but instead recites "a setting on an operation of the apparatus."

Accordingly, we believe the limitations in claims 20 and 26 (as noted by the Examiner) are correct and definite. Withdrawal of the rejection to the claims under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 14-26 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okude et al. (U.S. Patent No. 7,464,157, hereafter "Okude") in view of Chu et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2005/0015644, hereafter "Chu").

Claims 15, 16, 21 and 22 have been canceled thereby rendering the above rejection to those claims moot. Additionally, the Applicants have amended independent claims 14, 20, 25 and 26 to help further distinguish the present invention from the cited prior art. Independent claim 14 (as amended) now recites the following features:

"[a]n apparatus control system comprising an apparatus which requires a plurality of different settings, an apparatus controlling device for controlling the apparatus, and a server which is communicatively connected to the apparatus controlling device via a network, wherein said apparatus controlling device includes:

an apparatus setting section for accepting an input by a first operator, and performing a setting, the setting being at least one of a setting on a connection between said apparatus and said apparatus controlling device, and a confirmation on an operation of said apparatus including a test run of said apparatus using said apparatus controlling device;

a network setting section for accepting an input by a second operator different from the first operator, and performing a setting on a connection between said apparatus controlling device and said server;

a setting status monitoring section for monitoring an apparatus setting status

representing whether the setting by said apparatus setting section has been completed, and a network setting status representing whether the setting by said network setting section has been completed; and

a setting status display section for displaying the apparatus setting status and the network setting status detected by said setting status monitoring section; and

a setting status information transmitting section for transmitting, to said server,
information relating to the apparatus setting status and the network setting status
monitored by said setting status monitoring section,

wherein said server includes a setting status information receiving section for receiving
the information relating to the apparatus setting status and the network setting status transmitted
by said setting status information transmitting section,

said setting status monitoring section stores the information relating to the apparatus
setting status and the network setting status,

after the setting by said apparatus setting section has been completed, said setting status
information transmitting section judges whether the setting by said network setting section has
been completed, and in the case where it is judged that the setting by said network setting section
has been completed, the setting status information transmitting section transmits, to the server,
the information relating to the apparatus setting status and the network setting status stored in
said setting status monitoring section, and

after the setting by said network setting section has been completed, said setting status
information transmitting section judges whether the setting by said apparatus setting section has
been completed, and in the case where it is judged that the setting by said apparatus setting
section has been completed, said setting status information transmitting section transmits, to said
server, the information relating to the apparatus setting status and the network setting status
stored in said setting status monitoring section.” (Emphasis added).

The features emphasized above in independent claim 14 are similarly recited in independent claims 20, 25 and 26 (as amended). Additionally, the features emphasized above in independent claim 14 (and similarly recited in independent claims 20, 25 and 26) are fully supported by the Applicants' disclosure.

The present invention (as recited independent claims 14, 20, 25 and 26) is distinguishable over the cited prior art in that after the setting by the apparatus setting section has been completed, it is judged whether the setting by the network setting section has been completed, and in the case where it is judged that the setting by the network setting section has been completed, the information relating to the apparatus setting status and the network setting status stored in the setting status monitoring section is transmitted to the server.

Additionally, after the setting by the network setting section has been completed, it is judged whether the setting by the apparatus setting section has been completed, and in the case where it is judged that the setting by the apparatus setting section has been completed, the information relating to the apparatus setting status and the network setting status stored in the setting status monitoring section is transmitted to the server.

In the Office Action, the Examiner relies on Okuda in view of Chu for disclosing or suggesting all the features recited in independent claims 14, 20, 25 and 26. However, the Applicants assert that Okuda in view of Chu fails to disclose or suggest all the features now recited in independent claims 14, 20, 25 and 26, as amended.

In Okude, a control request is transmitted from the server to the control panel, the electric device is controlled based on the received control request, and the control result is transmitted to the server. Accordingly, in transmitting the control request to the server, the network setting between the server and the control panel has already been completed. In Okude, there is no need of judging whether the network setting has been completed, when the setting of the electric device by the control panel has been completed. Okude is based on the premise that network setting has already been completed. Accordingly, in Okude, a control result on an electric device is transmitted to a server, without confirming whether network setting has been completed.

Thus, Okude neither discloses nor suggests that after the setting by the apparatus setting section has been completed, the setting status information transmitting section judges whether the setting by the network setting section has been completed, and in the case where it is judged that the setting by the network setting section has been completed, the setting status information transmitting section transmits, to the server, the information relating to the apparatus setting status and the network setting status stored in the setting status monitoring section.

Additionally, Okude neither discloses or suggests that after the setting by the network setting section has been completed, the setting status information transmitting section judges whether the setting by the apparatus setting section has been completed, and in the case where it is judged that the setting by the apparatus setting section has been completed, the setting status information transmitting section transmits, to the server, the information relating to the apparatus setting status and the network setting status stored in the setting status monitoring section.

Moreover, Chu fails to overcome the deficiencies noted above in Okude. Chu merely discloses a network setting, and does not disclose or suggest transmitting a setting status of an electric device and a setting status of a network to a server. Additionally, Chu neither discloses nor suggests that the information relating to the network setting status representing whether the setting has been completed is transmitted to the server, in the case where the network setting has been completed.

To the contrary, in the present invention, after the setting by the apparatus setting section has been completed, if it is judged that the setting by the network setting section has been completed, the information relating to the apparatus setting status and the network setting status is transmitted to the server, and if it is judged that the setting by the network setting section has not been completed, the information relating to the apparatus setting status and the network setting status is not transmitted to the server.

Likewise, in the present invention, after the setting by the network setting section has been completed, if it is judged that the setting by the apparatus setting section has been completed, the information relating to the apparatus setting status and the network setting status is transmitted to the server, and if it is judged that the setting by the apparatus setting section has not been completed, the information relating to the apparatus setting status and the network setting status is not transmitted to the server.

Accordingly, even if Okude and Chu are combined, the combination fails to disclose or suggest that it is judged whether the setting by the network setting section has been completed when the setting by the apparatus setting section has been completed, and that it is judged whether the setting by the apparatus setting section has been completed when the setting by the network setting section has been completed.

Based on the above discussion, no combination of Okude and Chu would result in, or otherwise render obvious, independent claims 14, 20, 25 and 26 (as amended). Likewise, no combination of Okude and Chu would result in, or otherwise render obvious, claims 17-19, 23 and 24 at least by virtue of their respective dependencies from independent claims 14 and 20.

In light of the above, the Applicants respectfully submit that all the pending claims are patentable over the prior art of record. The Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections presented in the outstanding Office Action, and pass the present application to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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